

The Princess wears the academic robes and cap with which the public became so familiar by means of photographs at the time when she received an honorary degree from Dublin University. The ample folds of the gown and hood lend themselves admirably to sculpturesque treatment. The likeness is excellent, but the artist has failed to catch the Princess's happiest expression, and certainly does not flatter her. There is a certain dignity, but a lack of freedom about the work. Rumour has eagerly appointed COUNT GLEICHEN SIR EDGAR BOEHM's successor as Sculptor-in-Ordinary to the Queen; but MR. GILBERT, A.R.A., is a far likelier selection. MR. GILBERT will in all probability be called upon also to fill his late friend's chair at Burlington House. But all speculation on the subject must necessarily be idle.

A MIDWINTER NIGHT'S DREAM.

I WAS sitting alone over my club fire a few nights ago. The snow and frost would, I thought, secure me from interruption, and give me an opportunity for quiet meditation. I had just taken up *Punch*, when the door opened and someone crossed the room and took the arm-chair opposite to mine. I heard myself addressed in good English, spoken with a slightly foreign accent. I looked up. My first thought was that one of the Elgin marbles had escaped from Bloomsbury and was preparing to return to Athens, *via* Charing Cross. The speaker was a tall and magnificently proportioned man, with keen eyes and short crisp golden beard. He was dressed, or rather draped, in a flowing Greek garment, and was stretching out his sandalled feet to the fire. His face, which was singularly beautiful, was quite familiar to me, but I was unable to recall his name.

"God bless me!" I cried, springing up; "how well I know your face! Are you not—"

"Alcibiades," said the statuesque figure. "And your name?"

"Jones," said I, with judicious reticence. "But, my dear sir, you are shivering. Pray have my overcoat, and let me ring for whisky."

"Well," said I, as Alcibiades resumed his seat, wrapped in my overcoat, "I am delighted to see you. We Englishmen are what Madame Tussaud has made us, and we love to behold conspicuous virtue or conspicuous vice. You, for example, are probably the most inconsistent man who ever lived."

"On the contrary, my dear Ion," said Alcibiades, "I am probably the only truly consistent man."

"Consistent," I repeated, "to what?"

"To myself. Have I not made all else—honour, friendship, patriotism—subservient to my personal ambition?"

"What!" I cried, "were you never a patriot? You served your country long and well. Did you care nothing for her glory and success?"

"Much, my good Ion," said Alcibiades, "so long as it squared with my own."

I was charmed by his frankness, but a little afraid of seeming ill-bred.

"I'm afraid," I said, "that you object to discussing your private affairs with a stranger."

"Why so?" said Alcibiades, smiling; "I rather like it. In Athens my extravagance and success, and my—eh—*bonnes fortunes* were quite town talk. I talked with the best. You would hardly think me shy if you had read my speeches in Thucydides."

"Why, I have read them," I said, "and I'm glad to be able to ask you how far they are genuine. Did you and Nicias really say what Thucydides attributes to you?"

Alcibiades smiled—

"As a politician, I cannot reply. I know, of course, what Nicias really said, and what I really said; but I make it a rule never to preserve more

than a vague general impression of any political utterances, whether made by me or made to me."

"At any rate," I said, "there can be no doubt that you could have saved your country, and that, instead of that, you chose to bring her to the verge of ruin. You abandoned the Democrats, her friends, and joined the Lacedæmonians, Aristocrats pledged to her ruin. To cover your private disgrace, you stabbed Athens to the heart, and you chose to deal the blow at a moment when the success for which you had striven was well-nigh won."

"Yes," said Alcibiades, meditatively, "it is as you say. If I had remained at the head of the Sicilian expedition we should have restored Imperial Athens. Nicias would have supplied the ripe wisdom of age, I the energy of vigorous manhood. You forget, however, that I got my *congé*. My enemies made political capital out of that little business about the Hermæ. It was a pretty outburst of priestcraft and superstition."

"Inexplicable," said I, "to a Protestant Englishman."

"Really!" said Alcibiades, incredulously; "have you no moral laws binding on public men?"

"Why, yes," said I, a little staggered; "we have ten. Only one, however, is practically binding. I begin to understand. But why did you mutilate the Hermæ?"

He shrugged his shoulders.

"*Dulce est desipere in loco*. That's a phrase I have learned from my friend Horace in the Elysian fields."

"Exactly," said I; "*in loco*."

"You will admit, then," said Alcibiades, "that I could not act otherwise without betraying the purpose of my life and sinking into political insignificance. I therefore joined the Lacedæmonians, and my speech in their Assembly on the true patriot is well worth reading. They had learned from Socrates that the man best able to save his country is also best able to ruin it; so they received me gladly, and made no allusion to the Plan of Campaign in Argos and Mantinea. As for the Athenians, only one man kept his head. That was Aristophanes, the buffoon, who advised them to buy me at my own price. And now I want you to write to the *Times* and explain all this."

"Is it not a little late in the day?" said I, with some hesitation. "I might send an article to a future number of some review."

"You must write to the *Times*," he repeated, "and it must be now or never."

He poked the fire fiercely as he spoke and stirred it into a blaze. I started as the light fell on his face. Surely the features were less statuesque, the beard sandier and more ragged. Was it only my overcoat which disguised the grace of his figure? How the dirt of Bloomsbury had soiled his legs and feet. They looked quite black below his overcoat as he still stretched them out to the blaze.

"Yes," said I, half to him, half to myself, "able as you were to play off Aristocrats against Democrats—"

"In plain English, Salisbury against Gladstone," said the man in the overcoat. His accent, though not quite English, was certainly not Greek.

"And goaded, as you were, by the vehemence of outraged Greek feeling—" I continued.

"Outraged fiddlesticks!" he shouted. "What do I care for outraged Greek feeling?"

"Aristophanes was probably right," said I, determined to finish my sentence, "in advising your unfortunate country to buy you at your own price."

He sprang to his feet. What he said does not matter. It was rich in redundant adjectives, and contained a Categorical Imperative. *Punch*, which he seemed to confuse with Aristophanes, was in the fire.

It was really very unfortunate. I recognised him now and regretted my mistake. He certainly was not Alcibiades.

Nor was it my overcoat which he wore. Perhaps the Psychical Research Society will be able to inform me of the whereabouts of my own.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

THE NECESSITY OF HOME RULE.

SIR,—It is necessary to grant Home Rule to Ireland, not only because it is just to do so, but because it will be found practically impossible to maintain a permanent Parliamentary majority, opposed to that concession, having sufficient force to carry on the business of the nation. Exceptional circumstances have enabled this to be done, although with indifferent success, during the past four years. Ireland is governed by Dublin Castle, but the official hierarchy known by that name would be paralysed if deprived of Parliamentary support, and that support is certain to be withdrawn sooner or later through disgust and weariness. It has indeed been shown to be possible to administer the affairs of Ireland contrary to the will of her representatives, but this has been effected at the cost of great friction and loss of legislative power. Eighty-five members of a legislature cannot be systematically trampled on without damage to the House of Commons as an instrument of legislation, nor without detriment to the Constitution. The friction has been lessened through the circumstance that the Nationalists have had the countenance and support of a great English party. Mr. Gladstone's leadership of the Home Rule movement has also powerfully contributed to give it a moderate and constitutional character. Owing to these causes, the Nationalists have become for the time almost merged in the Liberal party. But how great an obstructive force they could exercise would be seen at once if Home Rule were dropped, as has been foolishly suggested, from the Liberal programme, and if a Radical Unionist Ministry came into office. The events of 1880-85 would then be repeated with greater intensity. It would be found impossible to carry out the Radical programme, owing to support given by the Irish benches to the Tory Opposition. As the spirit of faction is less amongst Liberals than amongst Tories, the practical conclusion probably would be that Unionist policy implies the permanence in office of Toryism, which would be a sufficient *reductio ad absurdum* of Unionism.

However, there are some Unionists, more rational in their ideas, who deny the irreconcilable character of Irish Nationalism. They tell us that there are many constituencies that can be won over by legislative boons and by the concession of local government. If this expectation were realised, the problem would be simplified. The question therefore is, whether Home Rule is the only panacea. That such is the case appears from the following considerations.

Suppose that Local Government be conceded to Ireland, the measure would be inadequate indeed if it did not include District Councils, and if all important heads of administration—including sanitation, poor-law, education, and a civil force of police—were not placed under the county or district authority. But this county or district authority would itself have to be placed under a central authority, which should have power to regulate its proceedings, and in some cases overrule its decisions. There is no authority at present existing in Ireland to which County or District Councils could properly be subordinated. The only central authority is the official ring at Dublin Castle, the members of which are all subject to the will of the Chief Secretary, whose power in turn rests on a Parliamentary majority at Westminster. We shall not conciliate Ireland by maintaining this system. Supposing that this decision of a local body be overruled at Dublin Castle—that is, by the Chief Secretary—he would have to justify himself only before British and not before Irish opinion, whilst his action, if complained of, would certainly be upheld by a party vote in Parliament. No place can be imagined less fitting for the ventilation of an Irish grievance than the impatient, overworked, and bored British Legislature. What a farce it would be for an Irish County Council to promote or to oppose a local Bill in the Imperial Parliament! Such a proceeding would involve the maximum of circumlocution and of expense, and would serve to bring before the mind of each Irishman the necessity for a central authority that should be at once Irish and representative. Their appeal in matters of local interest would then no longer be to a Legislature three hundred miles distant, composed of men unacquainted with Irish wants and unsympathetic with them. The present split in the Nationalist party does not affect the applicability of my argument. The fact that Irishmen are not agreed as to Mr. Parnell's merits or demerits does not make it more easy, but rather less so, for the British Legislature to direct the domestic concerns of Ireland.—Faithfully yours,

COUNTRY LIBERAL.

Corsham, Wilts, December 29th, 1890.

GENERAL BOOTH'S SCHEME.

SIR,—May I offer an explanation of some, at least, among the attacks upon "Darkest England," more favourable to the motives of the critics than that suggested by the writer of the article, "Professor Huxley as Titus Oates," in your issue of to-day?

There has long existed, and exists, such a thing as a passionate enthusiasm for the cause of the poor, combined with definite

convictions, not only as to what will do them good, but as to what must do them harm. I cannot expect you to give me space to discuss these convictions and their foundation in experience; nor, if you were to do so, could I say anything that has not been better said by others many times over. I only desire to point out that when we see the public following a leader, whom we believe to be blind, in a course which must, as we think, cause distress and degradation in direct ratio to the scale on which it is adopted, it is not necessary to go far afield in searching for a motive which makes us censure that course distinctly and persistently. We think that those whom we care for are in danger; and the more we care for them, the harder we shall fight against the dangerous elements of the scheme.

So far as I am concerned, not all its parts seem to me to come under this category. With Mr. Loch, I approve the inebriates' homes and a careful experiment in the way of a Farm-Colony. It is within my own knowledge that the Inquiry Office is of use. The Poor Man's Lawyer is an excellent idea, although it would need extreme discretion in working. I do not sympathise with Professor Huxley in his dread of the religious tendencies of the Army. Enlightenment can nowadays take care of itself.

This explanation appeared due, not in the least because my personal opinion could be thought valuable, but to dispel the notion that opposition to the wholesale and indiscriminate methods set out in "Darkest England" must arise from unconsidered prejudice. I believe that working locally, individually, and on common-sense lines, which are not at all incompatible with religious fervour, the Salvation Army might, through its hosts of wage-earning members, do a work which could be done by no other philanthropic agency in the world. It is on this local and individual work that the scheme of "Darkest England" summons them to turn their backs, in order to enter the oft trodden and fatal path of wholesale operation through "a great machine." And all who care for the better organisation of unskilled labour, and for the industrial independence of the wage-earning class, must necessarily show fight to a plan which seems to them an absolute barrier both to one and to the other.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

BERNARD BOSANQUET.

7, Cheyne Gardens, Chelsea, Saturday, January 3rd.

THE NEW PLYMOUTH BROTHER.

"MR. PARNELL had been for the last twelve years the ablest, strongest, most statesmanlike, and most reasonable leader the Irish Party had ever had in the House of Commons, and there was no doubt that so long as Mr. Parnell lived he would be in the front rank of Irish politics. . . . Mr. Parnell was a ruler of men."—Sir Edward Clarke, Q.C., at Plymouth, January 5th.]

THIS the tale of a cock, and a bull who has spoken:

Locutus est bos, with Sir Edward as bull.

Our cause is destroyed, we are routed and broken

On account of a black sheep who damaged his wool.

But Sir Edward declares, with the voice of a judge,

That to scoff at a black sheep, when damaged, is fudge.

"Twelve years," says Sir E., "have I loved him and feared him,

This pattern of statesmen, this ruler of men.

He is down 'mid the jeers of the crowd who revered him,

But I'll wager my fees that he'll lead them again.

He'll be up in the saddle and ride a cock-horse,

Our pet and our pride who is purged by Divorce.

"I feared him, I know: but I loved while I trembled;

And, since prudence and love should go always in pairs,

I proved all the passion that prudence dissembled

By advising my leaders to kick him downstairs.

But now that he aids us and spites Mr. G.,

Let him know he can count on the love of Sir E.

"Let the fools who rebuke us for cynical banter

Know that Sin isn't Sin that makes Salisbury strong;

So we all bet on Parnell to win in a canter,

With the cant of the cynics to help him along;

There's only one in it—a thousand to ten

On the Tory-pet Parnell, that leader of men."

* * * * *

So here is the point of this popular story—

If a man falls from honour, the cynics rejoice,

And he who in future wants praise from a Tory

Should break a commandment—the seventh for choice.

He'll be fêted in mansions and loved in the pubs,

Be the gentlemen's joy and the pride of the clubs.

And when at the Carlton the faces grow dismal,
 And the prospects of those that love bludgeons are dark,
 They will think, with a joy that is almost abysmal,
 Of the creed of the cynic declared by a Clarke.
 "And of that," says Sir Edward, "I give you the pith:
 'You may do what you like, if you help Mr. Smith.'"

MR. BALFOUR APPEALS.

I READ *The Times* the other day;
 'Tis that which sets me thinking
 Of certain sailors cast away,
 And very near to sinking.
 They could not pray; they could not read;
 But acting in the right direction,
 They took the next step to the creed,
 And did their best—a small collection.
 All of which sets me thinking.

I read the sneers—a trifle stale;
 Mayhap they set me thinking,
 An older with this modern tale
 Inextricably linking—
 Of one who did not love the poor
 With him whose motives must be better;
 And yet of love there's little more
 Shown in the wording of his letter.
 All of which sets me thinking.

I read the Royal Irish make—
 A fact which sets me thinking—
 One channel for our gift to take
 To peasants from them shrinking.
 Crowned with potato-leaves, they'll fly
 On mercy's task, dis-sension's healers,
 And win the people's eulogy
 On them, the gr-at potato-peelers.
 All of which sets me thinking.

And yet the Irish poor are poor,
 Wretched beyond our thinking;
 Whoever calls, the need is sore;
 Fact's fact, and won't stand blinking.
 Leaving a Tory press to mix
 And muddle principle and person,
 Give, and forget the politics
 Of him I make my casual verse on,
 Because I can't help thinking.

B. E. O. P.

A LITERARY CAUSERIE.

THE SPEAKER OFFICE,
 Friday, January 9th, 1891.

GOOD news for printers comes from America. General Spinner is dead. He is reported to have written "the worst hand in the universe"; but, of course, his pre-eminence in evil is difficult to ascertain. The compositors of THE SPEAKER (to whom I offer a respectful apology) may doubt whether General Spinner wrote a worse hand than that which they are at this moment endeavouring to decipher. Writing a legible hand has always been, as the Old Prophet said of Knur and Spell, "a link too many for me." The fault, I think, lies with the alphabet, and our style of *Schrift*. But then it is just as hard to write a decent hand in Greek, or harder. I fancy one could manage hieroglyphs, or picture-writing, moderately well; and it would be a pleasure to write in Arabic, a writing like scimitar blades. Ogham is easy and simple, if one has a squared stone and a chisel; but Ogham would make cumbrous copy. One cannot imagine our authors being playful in Ogham. Our own *Schrift* demands too much skill on the outside edge. The letter *s* is a difficulty which one can never vanquish. It dwindles down into an *i* with no dot. Then our *m's*, *n's*, *u's*, *i's* all run into each other.

Printers always turn *n's* into *u's*, and *u's* into *n's* in French words and proper names. They never print Baudelaire, always Bandelaire. Pens, too, are very bad. Most pens only begin to mark in the second stroke, and one is obliged to go back and make the first stroke over again. Most paper is too rough, and writing on it is like skating on rough ice. The wonder is that so many people write good hands. Almost all men in examinations manage to be legible. Begging-letter writers have beautiful hands, though they are believed to be far from temperate men. The nerves must have much to do with legible and beautiful writing; yet persons who took no care of their nerves, like Edgar Poe, have been masters of the most beautiful and legible manuscript. Dean Stanley was all unlike Poe, but his hand is well known to have driven printers wild. Among contemporary men of letters the worst hand looks lovely and facile, but it is impossible. The novelist who writes the worst hand makes no pretence to be legible; so the mind is applied with energy from the first, and, very often, with a microscope and a little ingenuity, you can make out what he is driving at. Even the authors of amateur novels usually write legible hands, which is more than some of their successful rivals can do. Writing well cannot be taught, probably; it comes by nature, and, to a certain number of us, it never comes at all. They fly to type-writing machines, which are the despair of style; or to dictation, which is worse.

Does any geographer know where "the Sea of Algues" is? It sounds as if it laved the coasts of Aigues-Mortes. This ocean—the Sea of Algues—is mentioned in the always entertaining columns of the Old Saloon, in *Blackwood's Magazine*. The critic is reviewing Dr. Ebers's "Joshua," apparently without quite appreciating the unconscious humour of the learned German, who calls Miriam "a young girl" when she was at least sixty-five. For she was older than Moses, and he was the contemporary of Menephtah, and he was an aged monarch at the time of the Exodus, in spite of a recent unauthorised version of that occurrence from the Egyptian point of view. However, it is in a fragment of translation from Gautier's "Roman d'une Momie" (not "de la Momie"), that Mr. Ebony's critic mentions "the Sea of Algues." Careful reflection leads me to conjecture that the reviewer means "the Sea of Weeds," an Egyptian name for what we call the Red Sea. Herein, according to the translator, "one could behold the marine monsters writhing in terror at being surprised by the daylight let into their mysterious haunts." "Then took place a wonder" indeed, as the translator makes Théophile remark. For it is extremely difficult to render French prose into English without leaving the French idioms, like the marine monsters, "writhing in terror," visibly before the naked eye. Mr. Swinburne, in a note to his study of Shakespeare, a translation from Baudelaire, has given an example of how French should be done into English, but perhaps, of all French, Gautier's most rebels against the English translator.

What a queer affair is life, in M. Paul Bourget's *Psychologie de l'Amour Moderne*! Existence there is a mere matter of making love, never *pour le bon motif*, never by a man to a maid, but always to a matron, or a lady, like Penelope, "of many wooers." People in M. Bourget's work prosecute this business into extreme old age—over forty; and when they are not making love, they are making aphorisms about it. They are always "dreaming like a love adept;" and their conclusion is this: "The dream of a love is for a man to be faithless to a faithful mistress." Love's middle-aged dream, at this end of the century is lamentably unromantic.

Is there really a world of readers, and are there tens of thousands of purchasers, for this dismal

wisdom? Love is the child of idleness and fulness of bread; and perhaps, if there is not too much bread in Paris, there is too much idleness. An Englishman, as M. Bourget observes, is "comparatively chaste," because when he is idle he has other resources in fishing, shooting, hunting, and the blameless though maddening pursuit of golf-balls into "the devious coverts of dismay," as Mr. Rossetti says—meaning whins, probably.

Mr. Stevenson's "Ballads," like the sip of milk-and-water offered by Mr. Squeers to his pupils, are just enough to make us wish for more in prose. Not that the ballads are milk-and-watery; the milk, if milk there be, is of the right cocoanut. But Mr. Stevenson must by this time have amassed wonderful treasures of story, and romance, and tradition, of white, brown, and black peoples in the isles of the Southern seas. These treasures are what we long for, set out in Mr. Stevenson's prose.

The people, whether beach-combers or natives, are in the Viking stage of existence—warlike, piratical, poetical, and full of legends and memories. These have often been collected and narrated; only once by a man with real imagination and vigour of style—the Pakeha Maori, author of "Old New Zealand." In other cases the tales are only told by folklorists, whose business it is to report what they hear, not to add—as Mr. Stevenson is certain to add—the charm of style and of sympathetic criticism. Travellers are usually very bad writers; we seldom meet a traveller who is witty, like Regnard among the Lapps; seldom with a traveller who is poetical, and learned. Had Mr. Stevenson accompanied Mr. Stanley, our knowledge of the Pigmies would be richer and more diverting than what Mr. Stanley tells us, though probably he can, and perhaps will, tell us a great deal more.

An ingenious lady, Miss Millard, of Mulberry House, Teddington, has invented, or adopted, a new industry—hunting for out-of-the-way books. Of course booksellers do this; but Miss Millard, who publishes an amusing catalogue called *The Amateur Trader*, seems to carry a fine instinct into her practice of the sport.

A New York editor sent a challenge to find a rare book which he had sought for ten years, and this lady discovered it in a month. Some people have "serendipity," as Horace Walpole calls it, and no sooner want a rare book than they light on it, cheap, at a stall. If Miss Millard can find the three volumes of Shakespeare edited by Sir Walter Scott, and lost at the time of Constable's *Krach* (according to the Memoirs of Archibald Constable), she can find anything.

The following extract from *The Amateur Trader* is amusing, though, perhaps, the historical bugle is rather expensive:—

THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO. The veritable real bugle on which the call was blown (by William Funnell) to charge on Sunday, 18th June, 1815, the day of the famous Battle of Waterloo, where, greatly outnumbered by the foe, our gallant men, under the Duke of Wellington, resisted their various attacks from ten in the morning until five in the afternoon; then the fray ended with immense carnage and the total rout of the enemy, followed by the flight of the once mighty Napoleon and his abdication of the throne of France; all possibly in no small degree owing to the enthusiasm and ardour evoked by the martial and soul-stirring call blown on this identical bugle.

"One blast upon his bugle horn
Were worth a thousand men."

Twenty guineas.

That dread horn should surely be in a military museum. It is probably more authentic than a snuff-box of Burns's which I saw lately, for the snuff-box was decorated, in low relief, with a copy of the design on Burns's monument. ANDREW LANG.

REVIEWS.

PHILIP HENRY GOSSE.

THE LIFE OF PHILIP HENRY GOSSE, F.R.S., by his Son, Edmund Gosse. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co. 1890.

THIS is a notable piece of biography. To be sure, it was undertaken with many omens of success. The subject is a striking and singular man: the writer is no amateur, but a skilful literary workman, gifted with a sense of form, and practised in the arts which satisfy it. And as a guarantee against that special danger of professional work, perfunctory execution, we have a third fortunate circumstance, the relationship of hero and biographer.

The omens are fulfilled in the volume before us. Mr. Gosse's judgment and sense of proportion have been inspired, without being confused, by his natural enthusiasm: and the result is a candid and balanced story, which charms from beginning to end, and constrains the reader not only to share the writer's interest and adopt his view, but to do so without any consciousness of being tricked. It is rare indeed to come across a book at once so full of feeling, so artistically conceived, and yet so transparently honest. It may be granted that Philip Henry Gosse was a strong man, bold of outline, unconventional, easily portrayed. Ardent almost to childishness in his pursuit of science, he was in religious matters a rigid Puritan. At the age of twenty-five he bought, without an attempt at thorough investigation, an undesirable farm in Lower Canada, simply because of the profusion of butterflies upon it. "I felt and acted," he wrote long afterwards, "as if butterfly-catching had been the one great business in life." And yet, when growing science came to blows with religion, he took sides against science without a second's hesitation. He hardly even dreamt of "reconciling" the two, as the expression is. "He had no notion," says his son, "of striking a happy mean between his impressions of nature and his convictions of religion. If the former offered any opposition to the latter, they were swept away. The rising tide is 'reconciled' in the same fashion to a child's battlements of sand along the shore." Nevertheless, Gosse did make one bold attempt to justify the Mosaic record of creation against the geologists; and, oddly enough, this man, whom no amount of reasoning or torture could have shaken from his belief in the literal accuracy of the earlier chapters of Genesis, chose to defend that belief by one of the most Jesuitical hypotheses ever put into a scientific book. The theory of "Omphalos: an Attempt to Untie the Geological Knot," may be briefly put as follows:—Life is a circle, of no one point in which it can be said "here is the beginning." Every living thing comes from an egg or seed, which must come in its turn from some previous living thing, and so back to infinity. Creation, therefore, must mean the sudden bursting into the circle; and its first phenomena, produced full-grown by the will of God, would bear signs of a previous existence which had never been. For instance, the first man would have a navel, the first brute would be created with teeth worn away by food which it had never taken, the first tree would display the marks of fallen leaves and sloughed bark; and, in the same way, Gosse argues, the strata with their buried fossils would be produced in that form by God at the moment of creation, indicating a series of pre-existent ages and forms of life which had really never existed at all. The answer to this was, of course, "You are making God out to be a liar, *Deus quidam deceptor*: you accuse Him of practising a conscious fraud and creating fossils 'on purpose to set a trap for the naughty geologists:'" and this is the criticism advanced in a kindly letter from Charles Kingsley to the author—a letter which Mr. Gosse quotes at length. "Omphalos" was a failure, and there is no doubt that it dismally injured the

reputation of its writer, who for once had been tempted to desert the sphere of observation in which he excelled, and adventure into that of speculation for which his training, habits of mind, and intense prejudices were the poorest equipment.

His life, though (with the exception of a passage or two) not adventurous, was singular in many respects: and Mr. Gosse, in telling its history, displays that enviable power of clothing small events with the interest they must have worn for the actors themselves, which is the triumph alike of the biographer and the novelist. Philip Henry Gosse was born in 1810, the son of a strolling, middle-aged, irresponsible miniature painter, and a sensible wife who must have found it hard to understand why she married. After the birth, which took place at Worcester, the family migrated to Coventry, thence to Leicester, thence to Poole, in Dorsetshire, where they settled in 1812. The tolerable paintings of the gentle but nomadic husband did not greatly enrich the family; and the wife let some of her rooms as lodgings to a couple of ladies who practised the art of "Oriental tinting." The family struggled up amid the sights and sounds of the busy little harbour, the local colour of which is admirably preserved by Mr. Gosse in the background of his first chapter. Philip gathered scraps of knowledge at the "dame-schools" of "Ma'am Sly" and "Ma'am Drew," and at the age of eight attended the more advanced academy of one Charles Sells. Of these three schools he has left an amusing account, which appeared, not so long ago, in the form of a magazine article. Later, he was sent for a short time to the well-known school at Blandford, where he had mastered some Latin and was beginning Greek when circumstances forced him to enter a merchant's office at Poole. The love of nature was already awake within him, and indeed from the very first he seems to have been unable to resist a butterfly: but otherwise he is drawn as a quiet boy, fond of poetry, and especially of Byron, shy in manner, and unsophisticated to a remarkable degree.

In 1827 he left Poole and sailed for Newfoundland, where he spent eight years in the counting-house of a Mr. Elson, at Carbonear. It must be admitted that here, again, Mr. Gosse's success is astonishing. By no long descriptions or digressions, we are conveyed into a country not less remarkable at that time for its inhabitants than for its scenery, and breathe its very atmosphere without effort, as the tale goes on. It is only when examining the work critically that we grow aware of the sureness of touch and the fine moderation of these two chapters. At first reading the tale seems artlessness itself. It was at Carbonear that Gosse grew into a man and developed the two main features of his character—his passionate love of scientific observation and his intense religious convictions—convictions no less narrow than deep. The growth of his devotion to science is carefully traced: that of his religious fervour is sufficiently unusual to be told in his own words. He was starting for home, in 1832, on his first holiday. News had reached him that his only sister, Elizabeth, was dangerously ill, and the anticipation of her death worked on his mind. He says:—

"My prominent thought in this crisis was legal. I wanted the Almighty to be my Friend; to go to Him in my need. I knew He required me to be holy. He had said, 'My son, give Me thy heart.' I closed with Him, not hypocritically, but sincerely; intending henceforth to live a new, a holy life; to please and serve God. I knew nothing of my own weakness, or of the power of sin. I cannot say that I was born again as yet; but a work was commenced which was preparatory to, and which culminated in, regeneration. I came at once to God, with much confidence, as a hearer of prayer, and He graciously honoured my faith, imperfect as it was."

In 1835, Gosse left Newfoundland with a Mr. and Mrs. Jaques, warm friends of his, and took the unfortunate farm in Canada to which we have already made allusion. In the winter of that year he began to write "The Entomology of Newfoundland," a volume that exists only in MS. Then he wandered up and down America, fighting poverty and observing nature; keeping school at last in Alabama, where he

fell ill, and returned to England in 1839. On the voyage he worked hard at his book, the "Canadian Naturalist," and contrived to finish it just before the ship entered the Mersey. His affairs were at their lowest ebb when he found a publisher in Mr. Van Voorst; and then followed a long series of papers and popular works with an energy that is almost terrifying. Their names alone would fill up this review, and the value of his writings and researches—particularly his "Birds of Jamaica," his microscopic studies of the *Rotifera*, and his *magnum opus* on British zoophytes, the "Actinologia Britannica," finished in June, 1859—is admitted. In 1864 he laid down his pen and lived the twenty-four years that were left to him in extreme retirement at St. Marychurch, close to Torquay. Other scientific inquirers were busy at his very door; but their discoveries concerned him not. Darwin's hypotheses were taking hold of the world; but Gosse, who had often aided Darwin in observation, would have none of them. He belonged to another generation; he had studied nature zealously and eagerly, but, finding that the only result of it was the embarrassment of religion, he cast aside his enthusiasm "as a very little thing," and turned his back on his darling pursuits. It was not that he hated them. Rather, they had ceased to interest him. It is a pathetic story.

And his son has told it unflinchingly and well, not without a particular charm in the more personal passages. The piously tender description of those expeditions along the Devonshire shore, where father and son hunted together for uncommon objects of the sea-shore (pp. 285-289), is an example of this charm: there is another on p. 223. Mr. Gosse has written a book which will not, indeed, be the talk of a season, nor extravagantly popular in the "libraries," but is, none the less, a considerable literary feat and a noteworthy addition to English biography. The book is fortunate in its subject, and its subject fitly honoured by the book.

THE REMINISCENCES OF AN IMPRESARIO.

THE LIGHT OF OTHER DAYS. By Willert Beale. London: Richard Bentley & Son. 1890.

MR. WILLERT BEALE acted as *impresario* of one of the most important operatic establishments in the world at an age when, from his published compositions, one would have supposed him to be occupied, not with musical direction, but with musical studies. His father, Mr. Frederick Beale, representing the famous publishing firm of Cramer, Beale & Co., was the first manager of the Royal Italian Opera; but the enterprise was conducted in so costly a fashion, and suffered so much from the competition of the rival house, which it had been started to oppose, that Mr. Frederick Beale's fortunes were at one time in a precarious condition. Much had been sunk in the new undertaking, and much promised, which, when required, was not forthcoming. Then it was that Mr. Willert Beale came to the assistance of his father; now, in his father's absence, directing the Royal Italian Opera; now, with his father in charge of Covent Garden pursuing to various parts of the Continent reputed capitalists, who, most of their money having fled, had afterwards themselves taken flight. Mr. Frederick Beale's connection with Covent Garden was of no long duration. He was followed by Mr. Delafield, who was to show the world, through the reports of the Bankruptcy Court, how quickly a hundred thousand pounds may be got rid of, when the owner takes to speculating in racehorses and *prime donne*. To Mr. Delafield succeeded Mr. Frederick Gye. But Mr. Willert Beale had now ceased all relations with the Royal Italian Opera, which did not, however, prevent him from taking a keen interest in the vocalists engaged at that establishment. He became an *impresario* on his own account; and among the chief members of his company were Grisi and Mario, who sang for him chiefly in the